



Parks
Canada

FIRE INFORMATION

Wood Buffalo Complex Wildfire Information Update – September 29, 2023 (Previously Parks Canada Fire 7, Alberta Wildfire MNZ003, and NWT SS069)

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Managed under unified command between Alberta Wildfire, the Government of the Northwest Territories, and Parks Canada from the incident command post in Border Town (Smith's Landing First Nation).

Tomorrow is National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, which is a day to recognize and reflect on the legacy of residential schools. To learn more about this day, please visit: <https://nctr.ca/>

On September 30, and every day, we stand in solidarity with residential school Survivors, their families, and Indigenous communities across the country, and we honour the partnership of Indigenous communities across Canada in advancing understanding and reconciliation.

Fire personnel are working on the traditional territories of Salt River First Nation, Smith's Landing First Nation, and the Fort Smith Métis. The lands which now make up Wood Buffalo National Park are home to 11 Indigenous communities, who continue to use the land for subsistence hunting, fishing and trapping, as they have for centuries.

In observation of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, there will be no update on Monday. The next update will be on Wednesday, October 4, 2023.

Wildfire Update

The Wood Buffalo Complex Wildfire status changed to “being held” on September 27, 2023. Being held means that the fire is not likely to spread beyond existent or predetermined boundaries under prevailing and forecasted weather and fire behaviour conditions. While the wildfire remains active, firefighting efforts and a cooler forecast have effectively prevented any significant wildfire spread over the last few days.

The Wood Buffalo Complex was last estimated at 504,492 hectares in size. There are currently 152 personnel responding which includes 17 pieces of heavy equipment, 8 helicopters and 88 firefighters and 7 structure protection firefighters.

Crews continue to work on containment lines on Pine Lake Road. Fire may impact access to Pine Lake Road and the road may close for extended periods without notice. Hay Camp Road remains closed as crews work with helicopters and heavy equipment to contain any potential spread to the north.

Rehabilitation of dozer guards and fire breaks continue in the Pine Lake area.

Although the weather is cooler, it is not uncommon to see smoldering ground fires. Fire suppression takes time, patience, and attention to detail. Seeking out and extinguishing hot spots is an important piece in ensuring the fire doesn't remain burning underground in these areas throughout the winter months.

The drought code is now at 1265. The previous record reached in the Fort Smith area was 840. A drought code over 300 is considered extreme. Due to the high drought code, the fire continues to burn deep in the ground. People can expect to see columns of smoke, flare-ups, and potentially torching trees for several weeks, depending on weather conditions. The presence of flame may be especially noticeable overnight.

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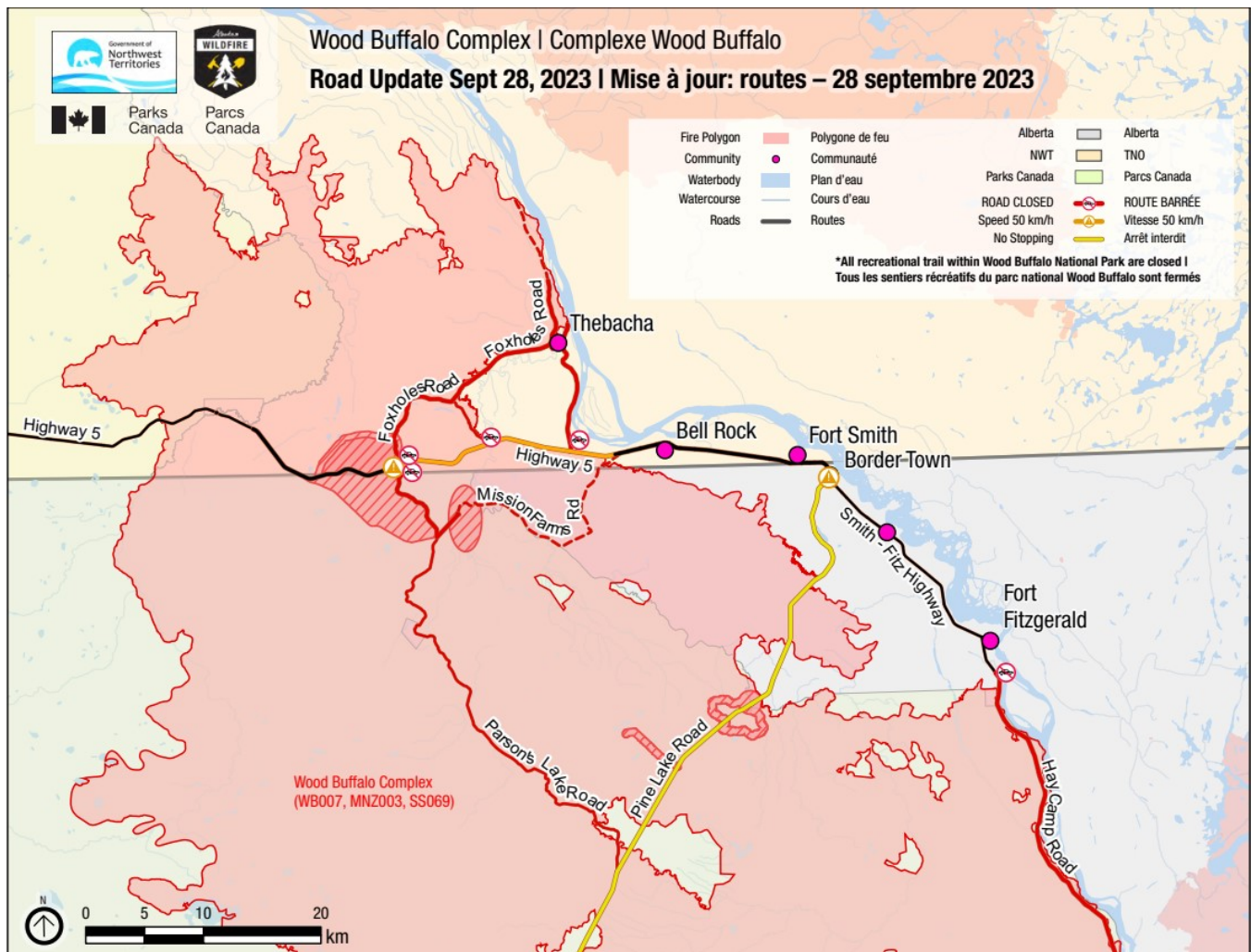
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Land users are asked to exercise extreme caution when in forested areas and refrain from driving on dozer guards. Recently burned forests should be avoided. Trees with burnt root systems or trees that are partially burnt can fall easily and without warning.

Closures:

The following closures and no stopping zones remain in place:

- Salt River Day-Use Area, Salt Plains Day-Use Area, Pine Lake Campground, Kettle Point Group Camp and ALL trails within Wood Buffalo National Park are closed.
- Hay Camp Road, Parsons Lake Road (including Salt Plains Access Road) and Kettle Point Road are closed.
- Foxholes Road and Connie's Road are closed. Thebacha Road is closed to the general public, resident and boat launch user access only at this time.
- There is a **NO STOPPING** area on Pine Lake Road from Salt River Bridge (Park boundary) to the junction with Parsons Lake Road.





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Additional wildfire information:

All other wildfires in Wood Buffalo National Park are being actively monitored and do not pose a risk to public safety at this time. Parks Canada will continue to monitor and action these wildfires as required.

For more information on wildfires, visit:

- Wood Buffalo National Park wildfire updates: <https://parks.canada.ca/wbnp-fire>
- Northwest Territories fire information: <https://www.gov.nt.ca/ecc/en/services/wildfire-update>
- Alberta Wildfire Status: <https://www.alberta.ca/wildfire-status>
- For up-to-date road conditions, visit the NWT Highway Conditions website: <https://www.dot.gov.nt.ca/Highways>
- An evacuation alert remains in place for Fort Smith. For updates, please follow Fort Smith Protective Services on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.comFortSmithProtectiveServices>

Report any wildfires or suspicious smoke in Alberta to 310-FIRE, in Northwest Territories to 1-877-NWTFIRE, and in Wood Buffalo National Park to 867-621-0136.

For further information, contact:

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Wood Buffalo Complex Wildfire
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250-270-0214

